

Including marriage contracts, tends to prove that such unions were the rule, not the exception, In ancient Egypt, and that they continued to form the majority of marriages long after the Romans had obtained a firm footing In the country. As we cannot suppose that Roman influence was used to promote a custom which must have been abhorrent to Roman instincts, we may safely assume that the proportion of brother and sister marriages In Egypt had been still greater in the days when the country was free.¹

It would doubtless be a mistake to treat these marriages Such as a relic of savagery, as a survival of a tribal communism ^e bS which knew no bar to the Intercourse of the sexes. For on a wish such a theory would not explain why union with a sister l^op^y^1} was not only allowed, but preferred to all others. The true the family motive of that preference was most probably the wish of brothers to obtain for their own use the family property, which belonged of right to their sisters, and which otherwise they would have seen in the enjoyment of strangers, the husbands of their sisters. This Is the system which in Ceylon Is known as *been*a marriage. Under It the daughter, not the son, Is the heir. She stays at home, and her husband comes and lives with her in the house ; but her brother goes away and dwells in his wife's home, inheriting nothing from his parents.² Such a system could not fail in time to prove Irksome. Men would be loth to quit the old home, resign the ancestral property to a stranger, and go out to seek their fortune empty-handed in the world. The remedy was obvious. A man had nothing to do but to marry

his sister
 himself instead of handing her over to another.
 Having
 clone so he stayed at home and enjoyed the family
 estate In
 virtue of his marriage with the heiress. This
 simple and
 perfectly effective expedient for keeping the property
 in the

¹ A. Erman, *Agypten und Aegypten* ² J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient
 Egyptian Life and Customs* pp. 221 sq.; *History* (London, 1886), pp.
 101 sqq.
 U. Wilckens, "Arsinoitische Steuer- Among the Kocchs of North-
 Eastern
 professional! aus dem Jahre 189 n. India " the property of the
 husband is
 Chr." *Sitzungsberichte der • könig.* made over to the wife ; when
 she dies
Vierteljahrsschrift der Wissenschaften it goes to her daughters, and
 when he
zu Berlin) 1883, p. 903; J. Nietzold, marries he lives with his wife's
 mother"
Die Ehe in Aegypten zur ptolemäisch- (R. G. Latham, *Descriptive
 Ethnology*,
romischcn Zdt, pp. 12-14. London, 1859, i. 96).